

Application No.: 10/728,609
Art Unit: 2622

Attorney Docket No. 23741.01
Confirmation No. 2486

REMARKS

By the present response, Applicant proposes to amend Claims 1, 4, 10, 24, 27, 33, 41 and 46. Also, Applicant proposes to cancel Claims 3 and 26. Upon entry of the proposed amendment, Claims 1-2, 4-25 and 27-46 will remain pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 24 are independent claims.

Claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 30, 31, 33, 42 and 45 stand *finally* rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lelong et al. (US 5,444,478). Also, the Examiner *finally* rejected Claims 5 and 28; Claims 6 and 29; Claims 9, 14-16, 20-21, 23, 32, 37-39, 43-44 and 46; Claims 32, 37-39 and 43-44; and Claims 11-13 and 34-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lelong et al. in view of Tanida et al. (US 7,009,652); Keast et al. (US 5,721,585); Jackson et al. (US 5,990,941); and Xiong (US 5,960,108), respectively. Claims 3, 4, 26, 27, 41 and 46 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Examiner indicated that the instant claims would be allowable if amended to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. In this regard, Applicant has amended independent Claims 1 and 24 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claims 3 and 26, respectively. Incorporated Claims 3 and 26 have been canceled. The dependency of Claim 4 has been changed to now depend from Claim -- 1 --. Also, the dependency of Claims 27, 41 and 46 has been changed to depend from Claim -- 24 --. In addition, Claims 1, 4, 10, 24, 27 and 33 have been amended to delete superfluous language and alternative phraseology, or to provide express antecedent basis for the claim language. No new matter is involved by these revisions to the claims. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1 and 24, as amended, and corresponding dependent Claims 2, 4-23, 25 and 27-46 are allowable over the prior art of record.

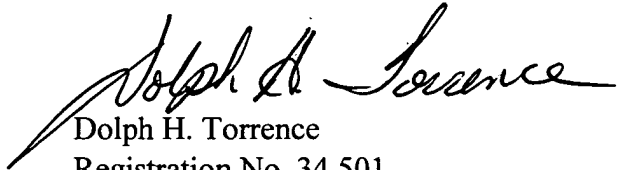
Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments made herein are in compliance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter and properly respond to the outstanding Final Rejection. This response represent a *bona fide* effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application. Care has been exercised to ensure that no new matter has been introduced and no new issues have been raised that would require further consideration and/or search. Accordingly, entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

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For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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DHT:dht
Attachment(s):Power of Attorney